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5 Motor vehicle body comprising a support structure made
 of large-size partial modules

The invention relates to a motor vehicle body of the type specified in the precharacterizing clause of patent claim 1.

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A motor vehicle body of this type is already described in DE 37 20 344 A1 and comprises a support structure made of large-size partial modules. A roof module of the support structure is placed via front and rear roof columns onto a basic module level with the side wall edge, the front and rear roof columns being connected to one another via a respectively assigned cross member. In this case, the rear roof columns are connected to one another via a rear parcel shelf which is stiffened by the assigned cross member.

A body of this type which comprises a support structure made of large-size partial modules is already known from EP 0 250 678 B1. One of the partial modules is a roof module which is placed with front and rear roof columns onto a basic module approximately level with the side wall edge of the body. In this case, the front and rear roof columns are connected to one another via a respectively assigned cross member in order to stiffen the roof module.

The object of the invention is the provision of a body comprising a support structure #2 which is embodied in a very stiff manner in the region in which chassis forces are introduced by the rear axle.

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This object is achieved according to the invention by
5 the features of the main claim.

Advantageous refinements of the invention can be
gathered from the remaining claims.

10 In the case of the support structure of the body
according to the invention, the rear roof columns are
connected to one another via a supporting plate of a
rear parcel shelf, as a result of which, first of all,
an improved stiffening of the rear roof columns of the
15 roof module or of the entire assembled support
structure arises. In this case, the at least one cross
member is integrated into the supporting plate, as a
result of which an overall extremely stiff bond is
created at the rear end of the roof module. The
20 arrangement of the supporting plate on the roof module
makes it possible, with the basic module structure
arranged below it, to omit transversely stiffening
elements at the upper end thereof. In other words,
those wall regions of the rear side walls of the basic
25 module which adjoin the rear roof columns do not need
to be connected at their upper ends - for example via a
cross member - with the result that a clearance is
provided between said wall regions. As a result, the
basic module is suitable, for example, for use for an
30 open motor vehicle, in which the clearance between said
wall regions is required for a folding top compartment.

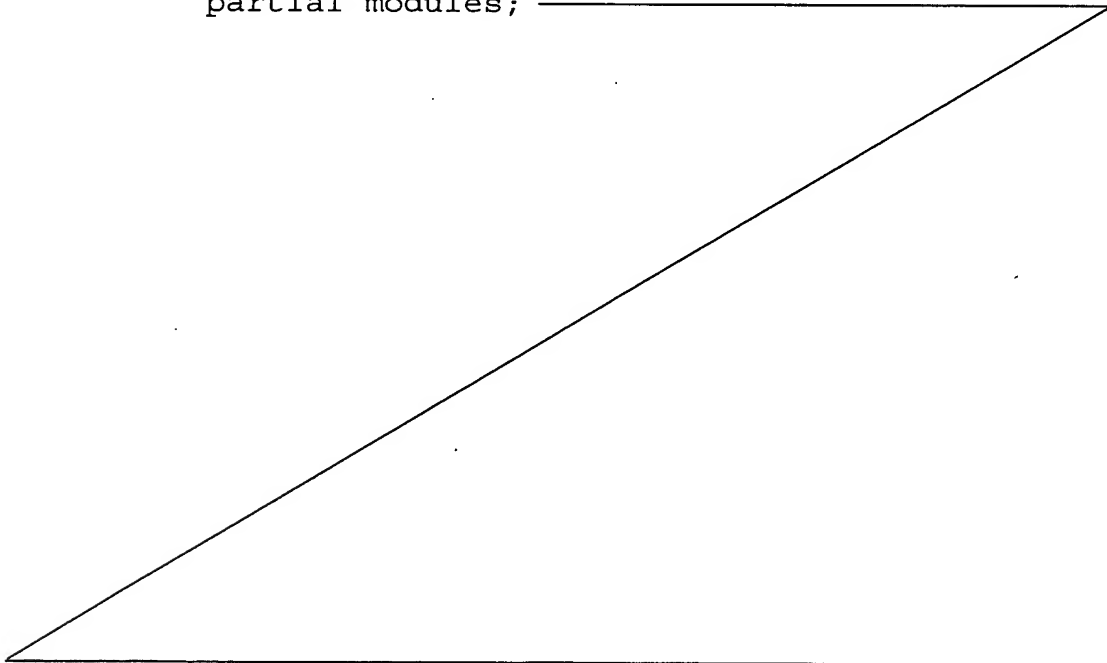
The support arrangement, which extends in the
transverse direction of the vehicle and is closed by
35 the supporting plate of the roof module to form a
supporting frame, makes it possible for the rear region

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of the support structure, into which chassis forces are
5 introduced by the rear axle, to be embodied in a very
stiff manner. In this case, the chassis forces can be
introduced particularly readily into the supporting
frame or the support structure, since supports are
provided which run in the vertical direction of the
10 vehicle, are connected to one another via a cross
member level with a vehicle floor and are arranged on
the inside of rear wheel houses.

Further advantages, features and details of the
15 invention emerge from the description below of a
preferred exemplary embodiment and with reference to
the drawings, in which

Fig. 1 shows a perspective exploded illustration of
20 the support structure of the motor vehicle
body according to the invention, which
support structures is made of large-size
partial modules;



AMENDED SHEET

Patent claims

1. A motor vehicle body, comprising a support
5 structure (10) made of large-size partial modules (12,
22, 34, 44), a roof module (34) having front and rear
roof columns (36, 42) being placed onto a basic module
(2, 12) approximately level with the side wall edge of
10 the body, the front and rear roof columns (36, 42) of
the roof module (34) being connected to one another via
a respectively assigned cross member (57; 62, 64), and
the rear roof columns (42) being connected to one
another via a supporting plate (60) of a rear parcel
15 shelf which is stiffened by the associated cross member
(62, 64) characterized in that the basic module (12)
comprises a support arrangement (66) which extends in
the transverse direction of the vehicle and is closed
by the supporting plate (60) of the roof module (34) to
20 form a supporting frame, the support arrangement (66)
having supports (68, 70) which run in the vertical
direction of the vehicle and are connected to each
other via a cross member (54) extending level with a
vehicle floor (14).

25 2. The body as claimed in claim 1, characterized in
that the supporting plate (60) is bounded at the front
and rear ends by a respective cross member (62, 64).

3. The body as claimed in claim 1, characterized in
30 that the supports (68, 70) of the support arrangement
(66), which supports run in the vertical direction of
the vehicle, are arranged on the inside of rear wheel
houses (20).

35 4. The body as claimed in claim 1, characterized in
that the supports (68, 70) running in the vertical

direction of the vehicle are connected directly to the front cross member (62) of the supporting plate (60).

5. The body as claimed in claim 1, characterized in
5 that the supporting plate (60) are arranged at the lower end (59) of the roof columns (42) between upper side wall sections of the roof module (34).

6. The body as claimed in claim 1, characterized in
10 that the roof module (34) ends along a vertical separating plane directly behind the supporting plate (60), with a rear module (44) adjoining the roof module (34).